

THE PAPER SESSION

Annual Meeting — September 23, 1972

1. Beaver Meadow Nature Center Harold Mitchell
2. Plum Island, New York, A Little Known Sanctuary Paul Spitzer
3. The Current Status of the N.Y. State Bird Book John Bull
4. The Monk Parakeet Invades Staten Island Howard H. Cleaves
5. Use of Birds in Literature — Emily Dickinson Maxwell C. Wheat, Jr.

The Resolution which was prepared by the Resolutions Committee and presented at the Annual Banquet was as follows:

Whereas: The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the Bird Study Group of the Cornell Campus Club and the Cornell Conservation Club and the Schuyler County Bird Club have so ably provided for the comfort and entertainment of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., and have served as hosts at this the 25th Annual Meeting of said Federation; and

Whereas: The preparations for and consummation of this meeting have been carried out with outstanding care, diligence and dispatch, befitting the Silver Anniversary meeting of the Federation, therefore

Be It Resolved: that we, the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc. here assembled, do express to said hosts our gratitude and appreciation for the aforementioned amenities and commend said hosts for their kindness and hospitality.

Resolutions Committee,

Neil S. Moon

Albert Fudge

Alice D. Jones

Allen Benton

Respectfully Submitted,
Myrna Memmerich

FIELD NOTES

Raven sightings in the Adirondack Mountains. While participating in a large raptor survey for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in northern New York, I have on several occasions observed Common Ravens, *Corvus corax*. The species was described as a "a common resident throughout the Adirondacks" by Merriam (*Nuttall Ornithological Club Bulletin*, 1880, 6:192) but by the 1900s New York records were very rare. (See ed. note *Kingbird* 18(4):199, October 1968). The single report of a recent nesting by Delafield (*Kingbird* 18(4): 198-199) and the implied paucity of specimens (Belknap, *Kingbird* 20(1): 14-15) led me to believe that the following sightings would be of interest.

I have grouped the sightings into distinct areas, which I feel may represent occupied nesting territories.

Area 1. This area is located in the high peak country of the eastern Adirondacks, Essex County. Greenleaf Chase first observed a pair of ravens here in March, 1960. Delafield (*op. cit.*) reported on the fledging of two young from a high cliff nest in 1968. On May 16, 1971, at 8:47 A.M. I observed a pair of ravens for 23 minutes at this same cliff, although no nest was visible. The birds were significantly larger than Common Crows, with exceptionally large beaks and head, scraggly throat region, and a long, wedge-shaped tail. They uttered harsh guttural croaks at intervals as they alternately landed on ledges and soared out from the cliff. On June 2, 1971, I saw one raven in flight near the same cliff, and what was probably the same bird searching along a road later the same day. Greenleaf Chase has seen single ravens about two miles from this cliff on two occasions in May and June of 1972. Area 1 contains a narrow pass with precipitous cliffs on either side leading out to two wide

valleys. The sides of the mountains are heavily forested but are capped with bald knob tops open except for occasional short yellow birch, *Betula alleghanensis* and wind-swept balsam fir, *Abies balsamea*.

Area 2. This is located between Clemons and Whitehall in Washington County. I have observed single ravens here on May 26 and July 9, 1970, and on April 1 and June 2, 1971. It is interesting that Dr. Walter Spofford found a cliff nest of the raven sixteen miles away in Vermont (different territory) and only three miles from the New York State border. At a visit to that nest June 2, 1971, I saw two large young on the nest and two adults perched nearby. At my only visit in 1972, on July 9, Lawrence Brown and I saw one raven and a lot of white-wash on the side of the stick nest and on the cliff below the nest and nearby perches. Area 2 and the Vermont site are at low elevations, 100–1,000 feet, with a number of nearby pastures and dairy farms. The limestone and shale cliffs are numerous and only the hillsides are heavily forested.

Area 3. The reports of ravens from this wild and remote region of eastern Hamilton County come from William Frennette. On May 10, 1971 Frennette watched a raven land on a long abandoned eagle nest built high on a cliff ledge. Campers nearby also saw raven activity at the nest. During the last week of April, 1972, Frennette once again saw a raven circling above the same awesome cliff.

I have observed ravens and heard of isolated raven sightings at various other points in the Adirondacks. May 30, 1971 in the company of James Spencer, along the West Branch of the Sacandaga River, I watched a single raven pass over our car. On March 28, 1971 south of Mineville, Larry Tune and I followed a raven with our 10x glasses as it passed our mountaintop lookout and disappeared from our vision about three miles to the north, still flying hard. Terry Perkins reported a raven "spent some time near the Stillwater" in late April, 1972 and John Ogden reported one four miles west of Speculator in mid-May, 1972. Mr. Chase also reported a raven "spending two months near Coreys" (Franklin County) in March-May, 1972, and the most recent report is of a pair seen and heard calling by Geoffrey Carleton (pers. comm. to W. Spofford) in Essex County on September 23, 1972.

It is not known if these observations reflect an increase in the Adirondack population or if they are the result of the intensive D.E.C. study and more trained observers in the field.

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Eldorado Shorebird Slaughter. Sunday, October 15, 1972 was a sunny 40 degree day with a strong chilling wind off Lake Ontario which was tolerated in the hope that I would see a phalarope or spot a jaeger offshore while walking the beach at Eldorado Shores Nature Conservancy. I was in no way prepared by any past experience for what lay ahead on this spectacularly beautiful fall morning. As I rounded the first point heading south I picked up two shorebirds in my binoculars; they were on their backs, legs upright, and closer inspection showed they had been shot. Then I saw the large driftwood blind further south, and the sad story was revealed. Empty 12 gauge shot-gun shells and dead shorebirds were strewn among the rocks the length of the beach. Numb with cold and disbelief, I collected 23 freshly killed shorebirds and even more shells. No one was to be seen on the property. I made notes, took photographs, and returned to Ithaca with the birds, and left them with the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology for verification of identification of the species, and in the hope that students or the Cornell Museum could use the skins. All the birds were adults, and included 14 Dunlin, 3 White-rumped Sandpipers, 2 Semipalmated Sandpipers, 2 Semipalmated Plovers, 1 Ruddy Turnstone, and 1 Sanderling.